

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This paper is submitted responsive to the Office Action mailed October 31, 2008. Reconsideration of this application in light of the accompanying remarks and amendments is courteously solicited.

Initially, the undersigned and applicant would like to thank Examiner Mondt for courtesies extended during a telephone interview which was held on January 23, 2009. During that interview, the undersigned argued that claims 17 and 18, which had been rejected as obvious based upon a combination of Oh et al., Mayet et al., Foulds et al. and Anthony, were not in fact taught or suggested by that combination. Specifically, it was pointed out that the Examiner had relied upon the teachings of Anthony for the different spring structures claimed in claims 17 and 18, and that the springs relied upon in Anthony were in fact completely different springs. Upon complete consideration of this argument, the Examiner telephoned on Monday January 26 to indicate agreement with this position. Thus, reconsideration of the rejections of claims 17 and 18 is respectfully requested.

Claim 15 has been rejected by the Examiner as obvious Oh et al. in view of Mayet et al. and Foulds. Reconsideration of the rejection is also respectfully requested as it is submitted that nothing in the art relied upon by the Examiner discloses or suggests the springs of different structure called for by claim 15. This point has been extensively discussed and argued with the Examiner. Nevertheless it is again urged that the teachings of the prior art do not teach a spring which is different in structure.

Dependent claims 10-14 and 16 all depend directly or indirectly from claim 15 and are believed patentable based upon this dependency.

The Examiner had also entered a rejection of claim 20 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as indefinite due to a typographical error, and also due to language argued by the Examiner to be unclear. By the present paper, claim 20 has been amended to correct the typographical error, and since the Examiner appears to have understood the correct language, entry of this amendment is respectfully requested.

Reconsideration of the rejection based on indefiniteness as it relates to claim 20 is requested. The claim calls for top and bottom edges of the fuel rod support part and side edges of the inner fuel rod support part. This language clearly matches with the specification, and it is submitted that it would be clear to a person skilled in the art what is and is not covered by claim 20. Thus, claim 20 is believed to be proper in form.

An earnest and thorough attempt has been made by the undersigned to resolve the outstanding issues in this case and place same in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or feels that a telephone or personal interview would be helpful in resolving any outstanding issues which remain in this application after consideration of this amendment, the Examiner is courteously invited to telephone the undersigned and the same would be gratefully appreciated.

It is submitted that the claims as pending herein patentably define over the art relied on by the Examiner and early allowance of same is courteously solicited.

It is believed that no fee is due in connection with this response. If any fees are required, please charge same to Deposit Account No. 02-0184.

Respectfully submitted,
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